CHAPTER 5 KEY POINTS

Each of Utah's 51 airports has its own long-range plan. Other plans, including the Metropolitan Airport System Plan (MASP) and the Utah Continuous Airport System Plan (UCASP), consider the statewide aviation network. Recent state funding measures support the continuation of rural airports throughout Utah.

Click here for the UDOT Planning webpage.

Chapter 5
Aviation

5.1 Overview

Utah has 51 airports that provide links for mid- to long-distance trips where speed is important. Aviation is vital to transportation efficiency and economic growth in Utah. Individual airports prepare airport-specific master plans. In the past, Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) prepared a Metropolitan Airport System Plan (MASP), an overall master plan for the entire metropolitan area airport system, to coordinate plans for these airports. The Federal Aviation Administration has not required the MASP be updated since 1993 and the role of MPOs in airport systems planning is in the process of being redefined. The UDOT Aeronautics Division prepares the Utah Continuous Airport System Plan (UCASP) for airports outside the metropolitan area.

A map of Utah airports identifying types of aviation service is located at the end of this chapter.

Metropolitan Airport System Plan (MASP)

The most recent MASP was completed in 1993 and made projections through 2015. Due to the large gap between available funding and airport expansion needs along the Wasatch Front, the MASP was intended to place each airport's development requirements into the context of a system of airports. This way, the MASP can recommend funding priorities throughout the system.

The following recommendations listed in the 1993 MASP still need to be addressed. Some are planned to be accomplished in the short term, but others remain long-term goals:

- Establish limited commercial service at Wendover Municipal and Provo Municipal airports
- Continue developing Ogden Hinckley and Tooele Valley as reliever airports, and identify another reliever airport
- Add a ramp and/or hangar space at Spanish Fork-Springville Airport and Ogden Hinckley Airport
- As Metropolitan Planning Organizations (WFRC and MAG), encourage communities with airports in the MASP to use proper land use planning and zoning to protect airports from encroachment of incompatible development
- Add an air traffic control tower at Provo Municipal Airport by 2005 and at Salt Lake City Airport Number 2 by 2025
- When demand grows, extend one Salt Lake City International Airport (SLCIA) runway to 15,000 feet to accommodate non-stop flights to Asian markets
- Increase terminal capacity at SLCIA by 2010
- Upgrade Heber Valley Airport runway design to increase capacity

Three new priorities have also been identified since the 1993 MASP was prepared:

- Establish an instrument approach procedure for the Spanish Fork-Springville Airport
- Install radar to provide aircraft separation in Utah County
- Construct a new airport in the Eagle Mountain community (currently being constructed)

Salt Lake City International Airport Master Plan

The Salt Lake City Department of Airports is responsible for preparing the *Salt Lake City International Airport Master Plan,* which was last updated in 1997 and made projections through 2015. It is included in the Metropolitan Airport System Plan (MASP), but its scope and impact on the transportation system merits individual mention. The plan anticipated the need to triple the number of gates and terminal area by 2015 to meet future demand. However, much of the 1997 Plan has become obsolete due to changing trends and the radical airline industry changes that resulted from the events of September 11, 2001.

Current planning for the Salt Lake City International Airport (SLCIA) passenger terminal and gate areas focuses on expanding gates for regional jet service rather than on growth in standard services, as originally anticipated in the 1997 SLCIA Plan. Two 1997 Plan projects focus on improving traveler mobility: the UTA TRAX connection to downtown and the addition of an underground People Mover train to transfer passengers from the terminal to gate areas.

The 1997 Plan predicted a major increase in air cargo operations that would require relocating these activities to a support area at the north end of the runways. United Parcel Services (UPS) has relocated there, but SLCIA has recently indicated that they have no plans to become a major air cargo hub.

St. George Municipal Airport Master Plan

St. George Municipal is the busiest airport outside the Wasatch Front metropolitan area. It currently handles 46,000 takeoffs and landings annually. St. George City is preparing an environmental evaluation to relocate its airport to a new site south of town, to allow longer runways and larger terminal facilities. This would enable regional jet service and enhance air cargo operations to the rapidly growing Dixie area. The current runway's length limits St. George to turboprop aircraft such as the Embraer Brasilia EMB-120, which seats only 30 passengers.

Utah Continuous Airport System Plan

The Utah Continuous Airport System Plan (UCASP), which deals primarily with airports outside the Wasatch Front metropolitan area, was updated in 1993. This plan includes the Utah Airport Capital Improvement Program through 1998, which is the equivalent of the STIP for these airports. The Airport Capital Improvement Program has since been updated annually by a separate document.

5.2 Major Focus Areas and Goals

Capital Improvement Planning

A fact that is not widely known is that, in addition to its highway resonsibilities, UDOT has a primary role in planning and programming federal and state aviation funds. UDOT currently has a short-term, five-year program for aviation facilities throughout

the state. UDOT's first focus area is in expanding the five-year program to include 10-year and 20-year long-range plans.

Upgrading System Airports

In upgrading the statewide airport system, safety is the top focus. The primary safety goal is to bring system airports up to FAA safety standards. The first push will be to add radar at the Provo Municipal Airport, as there is currently no radar coverage in the Utah Valley below the level of the intervening mountains. The second safety goal will be to ensure the length of the safety areas at each airport meet the latest standard, based on the *Airport Reference Code*. The five-year and future long-term plans will also focus on preserving pavement conditions and implementing rehabilitation projects as needed.

Upgrading Airport Access

Airports are intermodal centers where passengers and freight transfer between highway and aircraft transportation. One of UDOT's aviation priorities is to provide efficient access to airports. Several projects need attention during the current planning horizon, including:

- Southern Corridor Highway Project (southern Washington County): this project will provide better regional access to the new St. George Municipal Airport's proposed site than can be handled by a local street network
- Salt Lake City International Airport TRAX Extension: UTA and WFRC have long-range plans to add a light rail line from downtown Salt Lake City to SLCIA
- Provo City Airport Accessibility: Provo City and the Mountainland Association of Governments have identified the need for better access to the Provo City Airport. This will help expand airport facilities to handle air cargo and international flights

5.3 Funding

Federal Aviation Funding

Improvements at 35 Utah airports are included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). These improvements are primarily funded from the Federal Airport and Airway Trust Fund, which is funded through federal aviation fuel taxes. The federal match on projects is 90.94 percent, and UDOT typically provides half of the remaining 9.06 percent local share from the State Aviation Fund. Eligible improvements to NPIAS airports, except air-traffic-control facilities, are prioritized in the Federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP). The Airport and Airways Trust Fund provides additional monies for a Facilities & Equipment (F&E) program that includes air-traffic-control facilities. All other NPIAS funding is through discretionary programs of the Century of Flight Act (Flight 100), which followed the Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century (AIR-21).

Federal Funding Sources:

- Federal Airport and Airway Trust Fund
- Federal Airport Improvement Program
- Aviation Investment and Reform Act (AIR-21)
- Century of Flight Act (Flight 100)

FAA-designated Primary Commercial Service (PCS) airports receive an entitlement amount from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through the AIP, based on the number of passengers and amount of cargo handled yearly. PCS "hub" airports can compete for discretionary funding, and can also apply for authority to collect passenger facility charges. SLCIA has not done so, because this would result in deferring a portion of its entitlements.

A specific share of the AIP is designated nationally for small commercial service, reliever, and general aviation airports. The amount each state receives is determined by formulas that were last revisited in Flight 100. AIR-21 was a revolutionary bill and Flight 100 continued to make more funds available for aviation. The most significant changes for Utah brought by AIR-21 were a near doubling of the appropriation amounts for each state and added entitlements for small, rural airports. Flight 100 includes a pilot project that will allow FAA to work collaboratively with the airlines to reduce delays at the nation's most congested airports. It also addresses environmental streamlining and endorses FAA's joint program office and development of a long-term national plan.

State Aviation Funding

State aviation funding comes from taxes on general and commercial aviation fuel.

The State Aviation Fund provides supplemental funding for NPIAS airports and funding for the 16 Utah airports not in the NPIAS system. This fund was established in 1931 through a 4-cent-per-gallon tax on aviation fuels. Of that amount, 3 cents were returned to the point of sale and the remaining penny per gallon was used for statewide system construction, maintenance, and operations. This tax was not raised for nearly 70 years, and although the current value of the penny-per-gallon is $1.8 million, in 1998 the State Aviation Fund no longer fully met the entire airport system's needs. In fact, the UDOT Aeronautics Division proposed a list of 20 General Aviation Airports to be dropped from the system in order to adequately fund maintenance on the remaining system.

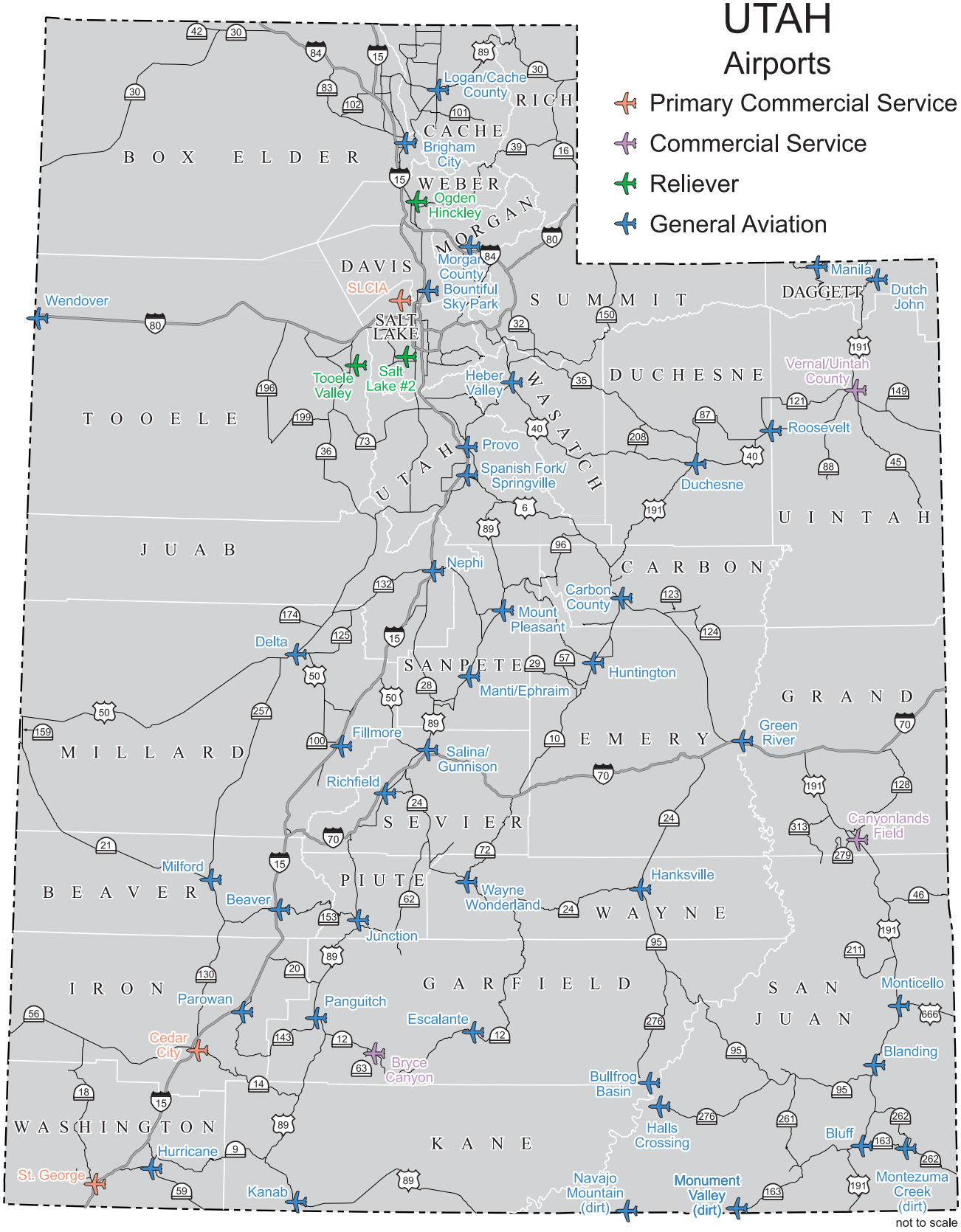
Rather than abandon these small airports that provide a critical, time-sensitive component of the rural transportation system, the Utah Legislature approved an aviation fuel tax increase in 1999. As of 2002, the aviation fuel tax for general aviation is 9 cents per gallon. Commercial aviation fuel taxes remain at 3 cents per gallon. This increase is providing an additional $500,000 annually for the statewide airport system. One of the biggest benefits is that state funds are available to match the approximately $3 million annual appropriation authorized by AIR-21, and will continue to be available in the future.

5.4 Recommended Projects

Until new funding was identified, all aviation expenditures went to reactive maintenance, so long-range plans were of little use. Now, long-range plans for Utah's airport system are being prepared, but are not yet available. The following table summarizes the major airport capital improvement projects that UDOT has programmed to be completed within the next four years, with the exception of entitlement projects that have not yet been defined. Though short-range only, the list is shown to give an example of the types of projects that will be included in future long-range plans. A full list of State Capital Improvement Program projects is included in Appendix E on the CD.

Major Airport Capital Improvement Projects (Short-Term)

COUNTY	REGION	PROJECT NAME/LOCATION	PROJECT CONCEPT	YEAR	ESTIMATED COST
CACHE	Region 1	Logan Instrument Landing System (ILS)	Facilities and Improvements	2004	$2,000,000
BOX ELDER	Region 1	Brigham City Municipal - Runway 16/34 Extension	Capital Improvement	2004-2007	$8,863,000
UTAH	Region 3	Provo Tower	Facilities and Improvements	2004	$2,200,000
UTAH	Region 3	Utah Valley Radar	Facilities and Improvements	2008	Not Available
DUCHESNE	Region 3	Duchesne Municipal - Runway, Apron, Taxiway Reconstruction	Capital Improvement	2006-2007	$2,509,000
DAGGETT	Region 3	Dutch John - Runway Reconstruction (Phase 1)	Capital Improvement	2007	$500,000
WASATCH	Region 3	Heber City Municipal - Runway Safety Area Improvements	Capital Improvement	2006-2007	$8,962,000
JUAB	Region 3	Nephi - New Runway 16/34	Capital Improvement	2004-2005	$4,069,000
UTAH	Region 3	Provo - Taxiway A Extension/Apron Reconstruction	Capital Improvement	2004-2005	$2,804,000
UTAH	Region 3	Spanish Fork-Springville - Approach Easements, Runway 12/30 and Apron Rehabilitation	Capital Improvement	2004-2006	$3,061,000
SAN JUAN	Region 4	Blanding Municipal - Taxiway and Apron Expansion	Capital Improvement	2004-2007	$2,174,000
GARFIELD	Region 4	Bryce Canyon - Runway Widening	Capital Improvement	2005-2006	$2,075,000
IRON	Region 4	Cedar City - Terminal	Capital Improvement	2004	$2,199,000
GARFIELD	Region 4	Escalante Municipal - Runway Widening and Reconstruction	Capital Improvement	2006-2007	$1,742,000
SAN JUAN	Region 4	Halls Crossing - Runway/Taxiway Expansion	Capital Improvement	2005-2006	$650,000
WASHINGTON	Region 4	Hurricane - Runway Expansion	Capital Improvement	2004-2006	$1,156,000
SAN JUAN	Region 4	Monticello - New Site	Capital Improvement	2005-2007	$3,100,000
WASHINGTON	Region 4	St. George Municipal - New Site	Capital Improvement	2002-2004	$32,873,000


UTAH
Airports
Primary Commercial Service
Commercial Service
Reliever
General Aviation
Logan/Cache County
Brigham City
Ogden
Hinckley
Morgan County
Bountiful Sky Park
SLCIA
Salt Lake #2
Tooele Valley
Heber Valley
Provo
Spanish Fork/ Springville
Nephi
Delta
Fillmore
Salina/ Gunnison
Richfield
Milford
Beaver
Junction
Wayne Wonderland
Hanksville
Carbon County
Mount Pleasant
Manti/Ephraim
Huntington
Green River
Canyonlands Field
Duchesne
Roosevelt
Vernal/Uintah County
Manila
Dutch John
Wendover
Parowan
Panguitch
Escalante
Bryce Canyon
Cedar City
Hurricane
St. George
Kanab
Bullfrog Basin
Halls Crossing
Navajo Mountain (dirt)
Monument Valley (dirt)
Blanding
Monticello
Bluff
Montezuma Creek (dirt)
BOX ELDER
CACHE
RICH
WEBER
DAVIS
MORGAN
SALT LAKE
SUMMIT
TOOELE
UTAH
WASATCH
DUCHESNE
DAGGETT
UINTAH
JUAB
CARBON
SANPETE
GRAND
EMERY
MILLARD
SEVIER
PIUTE
BEAVER
WAYNE
IRON
GARFIELD
SAN JUAN
WASHINGTON
KANE
not to scale